

Spring 2006

Under the Dome - Spring 2006

McKissick Museum--University of South Carolina

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UNDER *the* DOME

Telling the Story of Southern Life

McKISSICK MUSEUM NEWSLETTER • Spring 2006

The Essence of Nature



The Essence of Nature: The Art of Harry Hansen highlights the distinguished career of recently retired USC painting instructor Harry Hansen. His academic career at the University of South Carolina spanned from 1970 to 2004. During that time he was a professor of both Freshman Fundamentals and Painting and served in a number of administrative positions. But Hansen has always identified himself first and foremost as an artist.

Mostly recognized for his watercolors of the Palmetto state's diverse landscapes, Hansen gently captures the essence of the natural environment on paper. For more than 25 years he has created watercolors recording regional settings not only throughout South Carolina and the mountains of North Carolina, but in Maine and the Maritimes of Canada. From rock outcroppings, lush forests, and weather



worn barns to sandy beaches and the beautiful waterways, Hansen presents a unique impression of the American landscape, capturing many subjects overlooked by other artists.

Hansen's body of work extends far beyond his recognition as a watercolorist. During the 1960s he explored abstraction in oils and lithographic works. His most experimental approach to painting, beginning in the mid 1960s, was in the form of wax. Encaustic, a mixture of pigment and hot beeswax painted on a panel, is a process dating back more than 2,000 years. Using age-old traditions of mixing beeswax and pigment, such as the encaustics created in ancient Egypt and Rome, Hansen successfully mastered the art of manipulating his abstract compositions in a three-dimensional manner on a two-dimensional surface.

In addition to his long career as an artist and an educator, Hansen has been an active member of arts groups and an organizer of watercolor events throughout the Southeast. He is the recipient of nearly 50 art awards, and has been represented in nearly 150 group and one-man exhibitions.

The Essence of Nature: The Art of Harry Hansen will be on display from April 22 to Aug. 5, 2006. For more information regarding this exhibition or other exhibitions organized by McKissick Museum, please contact Jason Shaiman at 803-777-2515.

Above: Detail, *Country Home*

Harry Hansen

Watercolor on paper, 1994

Collection of Harry and Dee Hansen

Above right: *The Edgar Palmetto*

Harry Hansen

Watercolor on paper, 1998

Collection of Walter Edgar

Right: *Untitled*

Harry Hansen

Encaustic on panel, c. 1975

Collection of Harry and Dee Hansen



Sudan: The Land and the People



Young Dinka woman near Rumbek



Friday dhikr of the Sammaniyya Sufi sect

Armed internal conflict, drought, and famine have plagued Sudan—Africa’s largest and most culturally complex country—since its independence in 1956. A comprehensive peace agreement signed in January 2005 ended Sudan’s bloody civil war, putting its people on a challenging journey to create a nation in which all Sudanese can live and prosper together.

Working in conjunction with the University of South Carolina’s African Studies Program, McKissick Museum presents *Sudan: The Land and the People*, an exhibition of a selection of photographs by Michael Freeman illustrating the incredible diversity and potential of Africa’s largest and most culturally varied nation. The goal of this exhibition is to promote understanding and appreciation for the various ethnic groups within Sudan and raise awareness of the enormous cultural diversity and resulting complexity in all regions of the country. Through these images, Freeman illustrates a

grand, vast geography from savannahs and swamps to rocky hills and desert. He visited all the major towns in every region and some villages that no Westerner had seen in decades. Nomads, herders, and farmers, teachers and students, lawyers and doctors, industrialists and laborers—are all featured in this exhibition. The pictures show the Sudanese getting married, having children, and growing old. They capture Muslims, Christians, and followers of traditional religions. Freeman’s camera has caught, as former President Jimmy Carter notes, “the essential humanity of Sudan.”

Sudan: The Land and the People is a national traveling exhibition from the Meridian International Center in Washington, D.C., and will be on display from April 15 to May 27, 2006.

The 521 All-Stars, A Championship Story of Baseball and Community



Above: An All-Star pitch Below: The 521 All-Stars out at the plate



From Babe Ruth and Walter “Big Train” Johnson to Alex Rodriguez and Andruw Jones, baseball has long been a part of American life and culture. The “national pastime” can be found in nearly every corner of the country, from state-of-the-art major league stadiums to local sandlot fields where items such as book bags and folding chairs are used as bases. Baseball brings together entire communities and helps its players come together not only as a team, but also as a family.

The exhibition, *The 521 All-Stars, A Championship Story of Baseball and Community*, is a photographic tribute to a game, a team, and a community. This semiprofessional baseball team emerges from the images not only as a source of entertainment for the small town of Rembert, S.C., but also as the community focal point during the summer season. In these images, the 521 All-Stars win the league championship, mourn the untimely death of a beloved teammate, and reveal the potent combination of courage, spirit, and teamwork on and off the field.

This exhibit consists of photographs taken over the course of two years by Byron Baldwin, a retired photography teacher and founding member of the Light Factory Photographic Center in Charlotte, N.C. Award-winning writer Frye Gaillard provides the accompanying exhibit text. The South Carolina Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities provided funding for the 521 All-Stars exhibit. It is a traveling exhibition from Southern Visions: The Folk Arts and Southern Culture Traveling Exhibits Program, a program of the Southern Arts Federation.

Digital Traditions Launches in Spring 2006...



The ambitious project *Digital Traditions: A Public Access Initiative for Folklife and Material Culture* has entered its third year and soon will be available over the Internet. What does this mean for future researchers and museum visitors? The project is designed to make a large percentage of the Folklife Resource Center's holdings available online through the Digital Traditions Web site. Essentially, it will redefine what we consider a museum visitor. Interested members of the general public, researchers, and scholars will be able to access databases containing material on the traditions, artists, and documentary materials including a vast collection of images, audio and video clips, and textual information. The Web site will allow unprecedented access to materials that represent the collective body of work housed at the Folklife Resource Center.

In addition to providing a valuable option to the conventional, on-site museum visit, the Digital Traditions project has addressed a serious issue that threatens every cultural institution and archive—storage media obsolescence. To date, Digital Traditions project staff has transferred thousands of photographs, negatives, and slides; digitized hundreds of hours of audio; and edited and transferred a large percentage of the video collection. An all-consuming process that is painfully slow, digitizing requires attention to detail and technical competence unparalleled in the museum environment. Why so slow? The conversion of analog data to digital format takes place in real time.

We have continued to cultivate our relationship with the Creative Services staff at SCETV. Working closely with project staff, SCETV editors and Web designers are developing the Digital Traditions Web site with an emphasis on the digitized video, audio, and image materials drawn from specific projects including "Row Upon Row: Sweetgrass Baskets of the South Carolina Lowcountry" (1986), "The Rural Humanities Initiative" and "The Rural Arts Initiative" (1990–1997), and "Southern Stews" (2001).

While these four important projects form the foundation for the Digital Traditions project, the Web site is designed to allow for unlimited growth. Even as the Web site is launched, project staff will continue to collect and transfer new materials.



Above: An old-fashioned prayer meeting

Below: A scene from the Digital Traditions project

Foolish Again



The success of last year's April Fool's Day reception and exhibition at McKissick has prompted the museum advisory council to plan a repeat performance. This year's *A Fool for Art* will be held Friday, March 31, 2006, 7:30 to 10 p.m. The exhibition and art sale proved to be so popular that it will be expanded. The exhibit will open at McKissick on Feb. 18. Although the highlight of the exhibition will be the sales event on the night of the gala, the works will still be on view and available until April 8, 2006.

So, make plans to come to McKissick and be foolish once again. The McKissick Museum Advisory Council is already hard at work planning the evening's festive eats, entertainment, and a fun setting.

The Folklife Resource Center Releases *Feel the Presence ...*

The Folklife Resource Center has completed the second volume in the Considerable Grace Traditional Music Series. An exciting project, *Feel the Presence: Traditional African-American Music in South Carolina* features a wide range of folk music genres including gospel, work songs, blues, shape-note, and Gullah spirituals. The diverse group of musicians includes recipients of the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award, notable bluesmen like Baby Tate and Pink Anderson, and several rare live recordings. This production strives to make traditional music available to a wide audience and draw attention to South Carolina's rich musical and cultural heritage. Many of the songs have never been released on a commercial recording.

The CD is one of the tangible results of ongoing research at the Folklife Resource Center. As a University-based resource, the center draws several graduate assistants from a variety of disciplines and undergraduate students through internships. *Feel the Presence* is the direct result of an internship developed with the public history program.

If you know of any traditional musicians who you would like to see included on future volumes in the series, please send examples to the Folklife Resource Center or contact us at 803-777-6577.

Pets in America Moves Out of the Gallery

There are a number of public events planned to accompany McKissick's popular exhibit *Pets in America*. The spring calendar gets an early start in January with the first presentation on the interesting history of how pets came to be such a major part of our lives. Dr. James Serpell, from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine, will discuss the nature of animal-human relationships. Dr. Bernard Unti, from the Humane Society of the United States, who will explain the interesting history of the animal protection movement in the United States, will follow him in March. In addition, the Pet Care Trust will be presenting a March series of animal-focused workshops directed toward teachers, health care workers, and veterinarians. A highlight of the season will be a one-day symposium on the current status of our lives with animals. Dr. Steven Zawistowski, the senior science advisor at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, will give a presentation on companion animals in history. Other national leaders in the fields of animal behavior, legislation, and new breakthroughs in animal-assisted treatments for human problems will join him that day. This series will end with a talk by Dr. Susan D. Jones on veterinarians and their patients in modern America.

For more information on these programs, specific dates, and times, please call McKissick Museum at 803-777-7251 or check out the museum Web site at www.cas.sc.edu/mcks. Sponsored by the USC Office of Research and Health Sciences, this series will offer visitors a chance to hear recent research and thinking on how the role of animals in our lives is changing. The recent events associated with the hurricanes of last fall and other national disasters have prompted a new consideration on the status of people with pets.



College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

Telling the Story of Southern Life ... Community, Culture, and the Environment



The McKissick Museum is located at the head of the University of South Carolina's historic Horseshoe in the heart of campus. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The museum is open from 11a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. McKissick is closed on Sundays. Metered parking is available on all adjacent streets and in the lower level of Pendleton Street Garage.

A number of volunteer opportunities are available at the McKissick Museum. Call 803-777-7251 for information on membership, tours, programs, and exhibits. Visit us on the Internet at www.cas.sc.edu/mcks.

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Exhibitions

The Southeast Printmaking Invitational
through January 29, 2006

Pets In America
through April 22, 2006

Art and Nature: Art Glass from the Museum's Permanent Collections
Jan. 14 through March 11, 2006

Somali Lenses
Feb. 11 through April 1, 2006

A Fool For Art Fund-Raising Exhibit
Feb. 18 through April 8, 2006

Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Awards
March 25 through Aug. 26, 2006

Sudan: The Land and The People
April 15 through May 27, 2006

The Essence of Nature: The Art of Harry Hansen
April 22 through July 22, 2006

The 521 All-Stars: A Championship Story of Baseball and Community
May 20 through Aug. 12, 2006

Strength in Reserve: Broadcasting Radio for the Armed Forces in South Carolina
June 10 through July 29, 2006

Baruch Silver Gallery
(permanent display), First Floor

Gem and Mineral Library
(permanent display), Second Floor

Events

Pets In America Lectures
Feb. 2, March 2, and April 6, 2006

Workshops
March 3–5, 2006, three daylong workshops by Dr. John Pitts of the Pet Care Trust

Pets In America Conference
March 18, 2006

For more information about the Pets in America project, visit www.petsinamerica.org.

A Fool for Art Gala Fund Raiser
March 31, 2006, 7:30 to 10 p.m.

Some dates are subject to change without notice. Please call 803-777-7251 to confirm.

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